



NEWSLETTER

BRITISH MUSEUM
(NATURAL HISTORY)

- 6 APR 1992

PURCHASED
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NUMBER 2

VOLUME XXXVI

SUMMER 1990

EARLY BIRD GETS WORM

CBC Vice-President Ruth Young has been hard at work making plans for the fall meeting in Asheville, September 21-23. She has alerted the Newsletter to a motel reservation deadline of **AUGUST 21**. Since the fall issue of the Newsletter, which usually carries meeting information, will not be published in time to give adequate notice to members, we are including the necessary information and reservation forms in the summer issue.

Headquarters for the meeting will be the Holiday Inn East located at the intersection of I-40 and US 70 in Asheville, NC. Take Exit 55 off I-40 to the motel. The rate for single or double occupancy is \$42.12

including tax. You may use the form included in the Newsletter or call the motel at (704) 298-5611. Reservations must be cancelled by 6:00 p.m. on September 21 to avoid a charge.

A form is also provided for registration for the meeting. Remember that advance registration makes the job of our volunteer registration staff easier and saves you money.

An outstanding program is being planned with Allen Boynton, Mountain Project Leader of the Peregrine Release Project for the N. C. Wildlife Resources Commission, scheduled to speak Friday night. On Saturday night Dr. Fred Alsop,

a photographer and birder from East Tennessee State University, will present the program. Field trips will include the Blue Ridge Parkway, lower elevation locations, and Chimney Rock Park for nesting Peregrine Falcons.

The meeting will be hosted by the Elisha Mitchell Audubon Society of Asheville. They have in a special request for beautiful fall weather and an abundance of confusing fall warblers. Remember that this is prime time in the mountains and make your reservation prior to the deadline.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR PIPING PLOVER COUNT IN NORTH CAROLINA

SPRING MEETING REPORT

Interest in the ACE Basin of South Carolina's lowcountry was evident from the excellent attendance at the CBC spring meeting. Usually having the lowest attendance, the spring meeting this year drew 146 registrants.

On Friday evening Mike Prevost, Coordinator of the ACE Basin Project, discussed the ACE Basin Habitat Protection and Enhancement Plan. This plan is the result of the work of a task force comprised of the S.C. Wildlife and Marine Resources Department, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited and private citizens. Key elements of the plan are continued private landowner stewardship assisted with programs available from the state and federal agencies, voluntary conservation easements and deed restrictions, and public land acquisition. The objective is to maintain the natural character of the area by promoting wise resource management on private lands and protection of strategic tracts by public conservation agencies.

An interesting account of the program to increase the Bald Eagle population which

also benefits Osprey and other endangered species was presented on Saturday evening by Tom Murphy, non-game biologist for the S. C. Department of Wildlife and Marine Resources. The program followed the annual business meeting during which the officers presented by the Nominating Committee and reported in the spring Newsletter were elected.

Saturday field trips to Bear Island, Savannah NWR, Hilton Head Island and the Corps of Engineers spoil area were led by Robin Carter, Kevin Calhoon, Lex Glover, and Graham Dungas. A total of 174 species was seen with Wood Storks, Bald Eagles and a Swallow-tailed Kite the highlights.

Information acquired at the meeting was immediately helpful to at least one member on the trip home. Marcia Pryor of Arden, NC stopped to observe a pair of Bald Eagles feeding on a roadkilled alligator. She was able to impress other bystanders with her knowledge of the carrion eating habits of Bald Eagles.

(Information for this report was furnished by John and Libba Watson)

CBC member and consulting biologist for the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, John Fussell, fears that last December's brutally frigid weather hurt the wintering population of Piping Plovers in North Carolina according to an article in the June, 1990 *Wildlife in North Carolina*. The bird's status in North Carolina is unique because the state is the only place on the Atlantic Coast where this endangered shorebird both breeds and winters in significant numbers.

Next year, the N. C. Wildlife Resources Commission will help with a survey to count Piping Plovers. According to Tom Henson, coastal project leader of the Commission's nongame program, there will be coordinated international surveys through the United States and the Caribbean starting in January to determine exactly how many birds are left. Volunteers are needed to assist in the count. Interested individuals, Audubon chapters and bird clubs should contact Tom Henson, Wildlife Biologist, Rt. 1, Box 724-B, Chocowinity, NC 27817 or call the Wildlife Resources Commission at (919) 733-7291.

BIRDING SOUTH FLORIDA

BY
RICHARD C. BOYD

As a native of Florida and one who began his birding interest among the rich varieties that state has to offer, I had been eager to make a return trip to south Florida to seek out several species I had not yet observed. It was with great anticipation that Wade Fuller and I joined our pilot, Winston Dixon (all of us from New Bern) in his Cessna 182 and flew from New Bern, NC to Ft. Myers, FL on Friday, February 9, 1990. Our goal was to cover as much of south Florida as we could, including a trip to Flamingo at the southern tip of Everglades National Park.

After refueling at Jeckyll Island, GA (where we saw a Broad-winged Hawk), we made our way down the western coast of Florida. We flew over Crystal River where I counted between 20 and 30 manatees in the clear water below. As we flew over Dunedin, Pinellas County, I could see the home where I was raised, and we saw the two barrier islands offshore where I had enjoyed so much birding. Two White Pelicans flew by us over Dunedin. We arrived in Ft. Myers about 4:00 p.m. and promptly rented a van. We drove to Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, owned by the National Audubon Society, arriving shortly before the 6:00 p.m. closing time. As it was nearing dark, we travelled the famed boardwalk in less than leisurely time, seeing enough birds to whet our appetites. White Ibis were flying in for their evening roosting. Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets, Snowy Egrets, and Tricolored Herons were also coming in. Along the boardwalk we had excellent looks at the Florida form of the Red-shouldered Hawk, Little Blue Herons, Black-crowned Night Herons, and Green-backed Herons; some so close one could almost touch them. A Barred Owl could be heard frequently, echoing in the twilight, and we even came upon one right over our heads who seemed not in the least disturbed that we were there. As we emerged from this virgin cypress swamp we played hide-and-seek with a House Wren along the boardwalk.

With that nice beginning, we drove to the little farming community of LaBelle where we found a motel.

At Corkscrew Visitor Center we had pur-



Barred Owl

chased a copy of Lane's *A Birder's Guide to Florida*, and we studied it that night for the best places to find the birds we were seeking.

Early Saturday we started to comb the back roads in and around LaBelle using Lane's guide to steer us. In the ranching and prairie land in that region we did find right off Wood Storks, Sandhill Cranes, Anhingas, many Palm Warblers, Snipe, Loggerhead Shrikes, Red-tailed Hawks, and many common birds. One of the prizes for that region was a Crested Caracara taking nesting material to a tree where it was building a nest. However, our search for Scrub Jays and Burrowing Owls was fruitless.

Later in the day, as we moved from the LaBelle area toward Fisheating Creek and then to Lake Okeechobee, we found a second Caracara, many Harriers, Red-tailed Hawks, and Kestrels. Each little body of water we encountered seemed to have Mottled Ducks in it. We looked in vain for the rare Short-tailed Hawk along Fisheating Creek.

Toward midafternoon we found our way to the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge near Delray Beach. We went there to find Snail Kites, and Snail Kites we did find! Three of them. We got wonderful looks at them as they prepared to bed down for the night. Also at Loxahatchee we found Purple Gallinules, Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, many other duck species, Limpkins, Sharp-shinned Hawks, and

most of the wading birds one would expect.

That night we traveled to Homestead taking a room to be ready to enter Everglades National Park on Sunday morning. With the introduction of so many species of exotic birds into south Florida it should not surprise anyone that we found a Ringed Turtle Dove and an Indian Hill Mynah in the parking lots of our motel and a convenience store.

The Everglades were bone dry. At least what we could see of it. They really have a water problem in south Florida and it has drastically affected the bird life. It's down 80% in the last twenty years.

Driving along the highway toward Flamingo, we took our time at a number of stopoff points, especially at the Royal Palm Hammock. There, after two hours of searching, we found two dark phase Short-tailed Hawks cruising over the mahogany hammock looking for prey. We watched them for some time since we probably will never see them again.

At the Snake Bight Trail close to Flamingo we took a hike through the mangrove swamp to the coast. We were looking for White-crowned Pigeons, but we never did find them. However, at the coast we found a wonderful display of south Florida birdlife on the mud flats of Florida Bay. Roseate Spoonbills were numerous. A great collection of White and Brown Pelicans was gathered. We saw several white-phase Great Blue Herons as well as several individuals of both white and dark color morphs of the Reddish Egret dancing their way around in the shallows. Numerous shorebirds were everywhere.

We studied the coots at Eco Pond at Flamingo for an hour before we found one Caribbean Coot mingling freely and aggressively among its American cousins. In addition to many birds already seen on the trip, we found an adult male Merlin feeding over the maritime prairie. Our search for Smooth-billed Anis was fruitless, both here and at other locations.

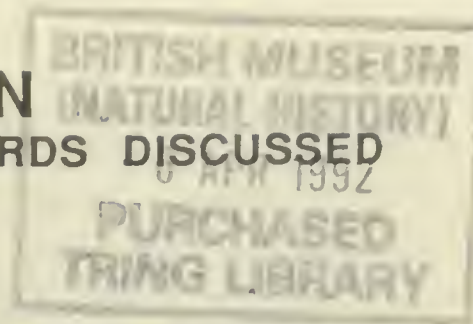
We drove back to Ft. Myers that night stopping in Homestead long enough to go to a spot Lane's guide recommended for White-winged Dove. Sure enough, we

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HUMMINGBIRD IDENTIFICATION

THE RUBY-THROATED, RUFOUS, AND ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRDS DISCUSSED

BY
DOROTHY J. FOY



INTRODUCTION

The current attempts at winter range expansion by the Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) is significant and should be carefully documented. "In the field" identification traits found in the fall and winter wanderings of the Rufous, Allen's (*Selasphorus sasin*) and Ruby-throated (*Archilochus colubris*) will be discussed.

Despite the fact that there have been increased sightings of the Rufous Hummingbird since 1980 (according to reports in *The Chat*), many remain questionable. No matter how expensive or professional looking "Briefs for the Files" might be, it is only as good as the data that goes into it! Time after time we read erroneous identifications, which makes for an enormous amount of misinformation circulating around North Carolina. Beginning in 1985, of the twenty sightings published in *The Chat* covering North Carolina there are only a handful that are documented as authentic. The rest, starting in 1957 through 1989 are highly suspect and should be disregarded. At present the reasoning seems to be..."if it's not a Rufous, it could be an Allen's"... "I have read the following in 'Briefs for the Files'..." "probable Rufous"... "could be a Rufous"... "highly likely a Rufous"... When this type of "hype" finds its way into print it should be disregarded since it serves no purpose! It will only add more mud to the already muddy water that surrounds this particular hummingbird issue.

Several different people could see the same hummingbird (an immature or female) only to have several different identifications. Since sight records are impossible to pin down, they should be stated as *unknown* hummingbird species. When one is dealing with many observers of varying skills and experience there *must* be some rather firm guidelines! Unfortunately, we do not have any such guidelines in place as of this writing. Hopefully, this article will spur thinking along this line. We should take a hard look at priorities, and right now these priorities should be:

a) the correct identification of all birds

that are thought to be Rufous, and
b) getting the correct information into print.

Too many observers, eager for an identification, call these birds "Rufous" without sufficient evidence. Not only does that take away from the exactness of the identification, it eliminates the other members of the genus from consideration. If birders, writers and editors would only realize that they are not adding to, but detracting from our ornithological knowledge, they would think over their identification more carefully. Unfortunately, these printed statements confuse an already perplexing and confusing situation. All are unconfirmed and are hatching year or females which *cannot be identified accurately in the field!*

I would like to urge observers of unidentifiable hummingbirds to report their sightings, complete with thorough documentation, including color slides or pictures to me, so that we may all become more knowledgeable about types of field identification problems associated with certain hummingbirds.

For the purpose of the article, an **adult male** is a hummingbird that has attained a full colored gorget and are the *only* ones that can be safely identified in the field in North Carolina! The following age classifications will be used throughout this article:

HY = year of birth

SY = second year of life, positively born the previous year

AHY = any year after the year of birth

RUFOUS AHY MALE (after Ridgway, 1911)

The full colored gorget is completed on their wintering grounds in January, February, and March in their second year of life. The rufous back of the male sets it apart from *all* other N. American species.

Gorget - a brilliant scarlet; Crown - dull metallic-bronze; rest of upperparts, including loreal and auricular regions, sides of occiput and greater part of tail - plain cinnamon-rufous, the back sometimes glossed with metallic bronze-green; Wings - dark

brownish slate or dusky, faintly glossed with purplish; Tail - with a terminal median, more or less fusiform or cuneate, area of purplish or bronzy dusky; Chest - white, passing through cinnamon-buff posteriorly into cinnamon-rufous on rest of underparts; Under tail coverts - whitish basally; Femoral tufts - white; Bill - dull black; Iris - dark brown; Feet - dusky.

ALLEN'S AHY MALE (after Ridgway, 1911)

The full colored gorget is completed on wintering grounds in January, February, and March in their second year of life.

Gorget - brilliant metallic-scarlet or orange-red. AHY males can be recognized by their rufous tail and rump, interrupted by a metallic bronze-green back and crown. The feathers of rump with basal portion (mostly concealed) - deep cinnamon-rufous; Upper tail coverts and tail - deep cinnamon-rufous, tail feathers with a terminal, more or less fusiform streak of purplish black or dusky, the lateral ones with this dusky confined mostly to outer web; Wings - dark brownish slate or dusky, faintly glossed with purplish; Loreal, orbital, auricular and postocular regions - deep cinnamon-rufous, sometimes brokenly extending across nape; Chest - white, passing gradually into pale cinnamon-rufous (cinnamon-buff on breast and abdomen, then into deep cinnamon-rufous on sides and flanks; Femoral tufts - white; Under tail coverts - cinnamon-rufous, paler basally; Bill - dull black; Iris - dark brown; Feet - dusky.

RUBY-THROATED AHY MALE (after Ridgway, 1911, with modifications)

The full colored gorget is completed on the wintering grounds in January, February, and March in their second year of life. The ruby-throat in North Carolina should *not* be confused with any other species of hummingbird.

Gorget - brilliant metallic red; Above - metallic bronze-green, including middle pair of rectrices; Wings - dark brownish slate or dusky, faintly glossed with purplish; Tail - (except middle pair of rectrices) dark bronzy purplish or purplish
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 bronzy black; Chin, malar regions, sub-orbital region, and auricular regions - velvety black, a small postocular spot of white; Chest - dull brownish white or very pale buffy brownish gray, passing gradually into deeper brownish gray on breast and abdomen, the sides and flanks darker and overlaid by metallic bronze-green; Femoral tufts on each side of rump - white; Under tail coverts - brownish gray (sometimes glossed with greenish bronze) centrally, broadly margined with dull white; Bill - dull black; Iris - dark brown; Feet - dusky.

FEMALES

RUFIOUS AHY FEMALE (after Ridgway, 1911)

Very similar to Allen's. Back - metallic bronze-green, usually slightly duller on crown; Wings - dark brownish slate or dusky, faintly glossed with purplish; Tail - middle pair of rectrices metallic bronze-green (usually more dusky terminally), both webs broadly edged basally with cinnamon-rufous (sometimes the whole basal half or more this color) next pair with more than basal half cinnamon-rufous, then metallic bronze green, the terminal portion purplish black, three outer pairs broadly tipped with white, the subterminal portion (extensively) purplish black, the basal half (approximately) cinnamon-rufous, the latter usually separated from the black by more or less of metallic bronze-green; Chin, throat and chest - dull white, the throat usually with tips of some of the feathers metallic orange-red or scarlet, sometimes with a large patch of this color. The rest of the underparts - cinnamon-rufous laterally, fading into dull buffy whitish on breast and abdomen; Femoral tufts - white; Under tail coverts - pale cinnamon-rufous, or cinnamon-buff centrally, broadly margined with white or buffy white, the longer ones sometimes with the central area pale grayish or brownish terminally. Bill, iris and feet as in AHY male.

ALLEN'S AHY FEMALE (after Ridgway, 1911)

Above - metallic bronze-green, the upper tail coverts with basal portion light cinnamon-rufous; Tail - middle pair rectrices with basal half (laterally, at least) cinnamon-rufous, the terminal half more or less metallic bronze-green; next pair similar,



Ruby-throated Hummingbird

but terminal portion black, the tip of the inner web sometimes with a small spot of white; three outer rectrices (on each side) broadly tipped with white; crossed by a broad subterminal area of black, the basal portion cinnamon or dull light cinnamon-rufous, this separated from the subterminal black (at least on the third rectrix) by more or less of metallic green. Wings - dark brownish slate or dusky, faintly glossed with purplish; Underparts - dull white (sometimes slightly tinged with pale cinnamon-buffy), passing into light cinnamon-rufous on sides, flanks and under tail coverts; the throat usually spotted, more or less with metallic orange-red or scarlet; Bill, iris and feet as in AHY male.

RUBY-THROATED AHY FEMALE (after Ridgway, 1911)

Above - metallic bronze-green, golden green or greenish bronze, including middle pair of rectrices; three outer rectrices, on each side, broadly tipped with white (the white tip on third rectrix smaller and mostly confined to inner web); metallic bronze-green for basal half, the intervening portion black; Wings - dark brownish slate or dusky, faintly glossed with purplish; a small postocular spot of dull white; auricular region deep dull grayish; lores dusky; malar region and underparts dull grayish white or very pale brownish gray (usually more decidedly whitish on chin, throat and malar region); the flanks and shorter under tail coverts usually more or less tinged with pale buffy-brownish; Femoral tufts and tuft on each side of rump - white; Bill, iris and feet as in AHY male.

IMMATURES (Hatching Year)

RUFIOUS (after Ridgway, 1911)

Females and hatching year males are very similar to those of Allen's except perhaps at *extremely* close range when the

difference in the width of the outer tail feathers might be apparent. The chip-notes of the Rufous and Allen's are almost identical. In both Rufous and Allen's the females have white throats speckled with red centrally and greenish laterally. In immatures of *both* sexes the throat is rather uniformly colored with bronzy markings. Both species are quite strongly marked with rufous below and on the tail.

ALLEN'S HY MALE (after Ridgway, 1911)

The hatching year male is similar to the adult female. Females and HY males *cannot* be separated safely from those of the Rufous Hummingbird. Both species have a similar call, a sharp "tchup." Upper tail coverts mostly (sometimes wholly) cinnamon-rufous; rectrices more extensively cinnamon-rufous, and throat strongly tinged with cinnamon-rufous and spotted or speckled with dark bronzy.

RUBY-THROATED HY FEMALE AND MALE

HY female is similar to the HY male, but throat without dusky streaks. Separation from AHY females is difficult, but young females tend to have a brighter yellow to orange gape, more brown on the flanks, a more streaked throat and unworn edges on the back and crown feathers. HY female's tail is rounded and white tipped and lacks any rufous color at the base. HY male is similar to the adult female, but feathers of upperparts very narrowly and indistinctly margined terminally with pale grayish buffy, throat with small mesial streaks of dusky, and underparts *usually* more strongly tinged with buffy brownish, especially on sides and flanks. May lack red throat feathers through early autumn.

BODY MOLT

I include a short discussion of body molt largely for completeness. Contrary to public opinion, evidence of body molt can and does occur in October, November and December. In a Hendersonville, NC Rufous specimen (# 11674 in collection of the N. C. State Museum in Raleigh), which expired 12/13/86 (shortly after capture) the bird showed evidence of body molt. A fellow hummingbird bander in Alabama has handled Rufous males in body molt (chest, belly, head and gorget) in October, November and December
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(personal conversation). This writer has banded Ruby-throated Hummingbirds in September and October with body molt (belly, chest and head) in full swing. One adult female (taken in mid-September) was used for plumage comparison. It resembled most the young hummingbirds, in that extensive molt was apparent over the head, breast and belly regions. The older bird (but not the young) was molting the upper tail coverts, which were mere pinfeathers.

CONCLUSION

Robert A. Tyrrell, author of *Hummingbirds, Their Life & Behavior*, and I had a most enlightening phone conversation one day in the middle of March, 1990, with regard to identifying various species. This expert on hummingbirds gave me the benefit of his knowledge. Indeed, female and hatching year males of Allen's and Rufous are impossible to identify in the field. This is also true of the second year females and some second year males in January of their second year. Likewise the Ruby-throated hatching year females are virtually impossible to separate from the hatching year males. The above is taken almost verbatim from our conversation. Therefore, our conclusion is that the only way for a scientific identification to be correct is for the bird to be accurately measured in the hand by an experienced, duly federally and state licensed bird bander.

It is an established fact among ornithologists and hummingbird banders alike, working with the "look alike" species, that the various birds resemble each other so closely that they *cannot* be separated in

the field! With the possibility of an increasing amount of western hummingbirds visiting our area, I would suggest that birders not immediately identify a non Ruby-throated as a Rufous. I hope that this article will give birders a certain "feel" for the birds discussed here and help to reduce the tendency of observers to guess at a hummingbird's identity.

REFERENCES USED

- Johnsgard, Paul A. 1983. The Hummingbirds of North America. Smithsonian Institution. Washington, D.C.
Ridgway, R. 1911. Birds of North and Middle America. Part V. U.S. National Museum Bulletin.

P.O. Box 457, Oriental, NC 28571

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(BIRDING continued from page 2)
found one at a nursery just where he said it would be.

Early on Monday morning we drove from Ft. Myers to Cape Coral determined to find some Burrowing Owls we were told were there. Our directions were to go to the Pizza Hut and look in the vacant lots behind it. Can you imagine that--right in a housing and commercial area! We went and looked but could not find the owls. Chancing upon some children waiting for a school bus we asked them about the owls. They pointed out the nest to us about a half a block away. They also told us of another one a few blocks away. Burrowing Owls stand near the entrance of their nests early in the morning, and we got excellent looks at two nests and four birds.

We then went to Sanibel Island to the Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge to look for anis. There is much birdlife in this refuge, but we did not find the anis.

Back in Ft. Myers we gassed the plane and took off for home; arriving in New Bern just at dark. It was a long, adventurous trip, and it was well worth it. We saw 117 species of birds, including six lifers for me. Wade vows that we shall return. He still needs a Scrub Jay, and we both need the elusive Mangrove Cuckoo and White-crowned Pigeon, not to mention those darn anis.

411 Johnson St., New Bern, NC 28560

* * *

BIRD CLASSES

St. Paul (MN) Audubon has proposed an innovative idea which may be of interest to CBC or its affiliate clubs. Bird classes! These courses are for the birds. A few examples follow:

Assertiveness Training for Bluebirds. This course will provide you Eastern Bluebirds with the knowledge and skills to deal effectively with those intrusive sparrows and starlings. Don't put up with their interference in your home life--learn how to take possession of your nest box and keep it.

Advanced Singing Instruction for Robins. Taught by Rose B. Grosbeak, noted for annual spring concerts throughout the state, these tailored lessons will enable robins to sing with more feeling and greater nuances.

Shallow Water Fishing Techniques. Our instructor, G. B. Heron, is an acknowledged expert in this area. This course is restricted to waders only, please. But there will be a wading list if the class fills up.

Have Feathers, Will Travel. A course on long-distance migration techniques taught by the Tern family, one of whom, Arctic Tern, holds the distance migration record for the Western Hemisphere.

Basic Humanwatching Skills. Now more fashionably called "humaning," this is one of the fastest growing hobbies among birds of all ages and species. Learn how to identify all types of humans (oldsters, teenagers, punks, yuppies, toddlers, folks in mid-life crisis, etc.). Find out about the various types of human habitats: large cities (nesting habitat for urbanites), suburbs (humans there are frequently escapees from cities), small towns and the country (containing what were often erroneously called hicks or bumpkins). And learn to use your keen avian eyesight to spot human rarities such as hippies (formerly in greater numbers) and Edsel-drivers (now nearly extinct). This course will have a field trip on which you'll have several guided flights over a local area frequented by a variety of humans.

BACKYARD BIRDING

with

FRANCES J. NELSON

Roger Foy, Oriental, NC reminds us to participate in **Project Feederwatch**, sponsored by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. The cost is \$9.00, and all we have to do is sign up and watch our feeders. For more information write:

Project Feederwatch
Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology
159 Sapsucker Woods Road
Ithaca, NY 14850

* * *

This, our first spring on our property in southern Granville County, has been wonderfully exciting because of all the new birds and flowers we have encountered. As of June 6, our wildflower list contained 110 species and our bird list 79. Almost everyday we identify a new bird or wildflower. Our morning and evening walks are truly exhilarating because we usually see something new or different.

Every new sighting temporarily raises our adrenalin, but perhaps the most exciting moment occurred on Memorial Day, in the pouring rain, when we heard, then saw, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak. He spent most of the day in an oak tree beside our garage, so we could set up the spotting scope out of the rain and watch. Then, Tuesday, he sat on our back deck eating sunflower seeds for about half an hour. We have since heard him but have not seen him again. We are hoping, of course, that he and his mate will nest here, but we haven't seen the female at all.

The grosbeak has caused me to get ahead of myself, but I had to tell you about that first. Now I'll backtrack. In mid March our feeders stayed filled. We had a few birds, but nothing like the numbers of wintering goldfinches, juncos, and Purple Finches. In late March, the activity began. Goldfinches began to arrive in swarms. From the front door, I saw a wave of yellow on the ground and in the young pine trees at the end of the driveway, and, of course, our feeders began to empty. We had to fill the sunflower and thistle feeders daily. This lasted about two weeks, and then, suddenly the birds were gone, and we had another lull. About two weeks later, we had another glitter of goldfinches. Many of those have stayed to nest and raise their families here.

On March 21, the bluebirds began building their nest in one of our houses, and chickadees began a nest in another house. Unfortunately, we saw neither batch fledge. The chickadees were out of the nest when we returned from the CBC meeting in South Carolina, and the bluebirds left the next weekend when we were gone again. We've kept up with the young chickadees because they love the Marvel Meal, but we haven't seen the bluebird babies. We're afraid something may have happened to them. However, we may get to see a batch yet, as the adults have started another nest.

We also have a pair of kingbirds building a nest on the island in our pond. When I first saw it, it looked like a bunch of grass had gotten trapped in the willow tree, but I had seen the kingbirds near it, so I kept watching. Gradually, it took on the appearance of a nest, but we haven't seen any evidence of actual sitting yet. We'd love to go out to the island and inspect, but we're afraid we might scare the kings off.

And although we haven't found the nest, we're pretty sure a Louisiana Waterthrush has found a mate and moved in down by the creek. We heard him singing regularly from April 10, and now lately, we've seen him hanging around one area of the creek.

April 10 was a big day. Not only did we hear and see the waterthrush, but a Great Blue Heron in full breeding plumage spent the day on our pond. He sauntered around the edge fishing like he was the only creature in the world--a slow ballet like he didn't have a thing to worry about except his next snack.

In May, until we saw the Rose-breasted Grosbeak, perhaps the most exciting bird was a Hooded Warbler. At least, it was exciting for me. Since I can remember, I've marvelled at the pictures of the Hooded Warbler in bird books. I'm not sure why I was so fascinated by it, but I was, and I finally saw one on our property just singing away. He's still around, and I still gasp when I see him.

Unfortunately, all is not perfect on our little piece of Earth. Grackles moved in and stayed about three weeks, and cowbirds are still here. At least the grackles moved on, but what can we do about the cow-

birds? I've watched them, trying to find something good to say about them, but so far, I have found nothing endearing. Their voices and songs(?) are disgusting and their nesting habits are even worse. We did find one cowbird egg in a titmouse nest, but we know more eggs are in nests that we can't protect. My husband wonders if we could train a cat to eat nothing but cowbirds. We've tried frightening them with the BB gun, but that doesn't seem to discourage them at all.

I do have more good news, however. The Blue Grosbeak is back. I see him frequently on the back deck, usually in midmorning and then again late in the afternoon. And this year, I've seen the female. She is not nearly as skittish as he is. One day I watched her through the kitchen window for about fifteen minutes. The male has never allowed viewing that long. She doesn't come as regularly as he does, but she has been back several times.

And we have a pair of Indigo Buntings. I haven't seen either one on the deck, although last year a male visited once, but we do see them flitting around the woods. We've narrowed down the nesting area, but we haven't found the actual nest yet.

We finally put up a Wood Duck box, and though a pair came by and looked at it, we have none nesting this year. Being perpetual optimists, we aren't discouraged. We'll wait until next year.

Our martin house, too, remains empty. We have seen martins twice, but they didn't stay. Since it was relatively late when we saw them, we've decided that they were this year's young inspecting the house for future use. One male bluebird, though, likes the martin house as a lookout. He sits on top frequently; guarding his nearby domain.

Some of the birds we've added to our property list this spring are White-eyed and Red-eyed Vireos, Spotted Sandpiper, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Prairie Warbler, Acadian and Great Crested Flycatchers, and a Double Crested Cormorant, although the cormorant only made a brief stop. We have many other species and love to show our birds to fellow birders. If anyone wants to go birding in a relaxed

(continued on next page)

atmosphere a few miles north of Raleigh, let us know (919) 528-2827. Just don't call after 9:30 p.m.

I would still love to add information from other members to this column. I did try the cantaloupe idea that D. J. Abraham told us about in the last newsletter, but the squirrels ate it. I'll keep trying, though, because it is a nice idea for recycling, and it's something to do with the cantaloupe seeds. If I put them in the compost pile, they sprout.

At any rate, that's it for this newsletter. Please send tidbits of information to me at 7776 Dogwood Hill Lane, Wake Forest, NC 27587

Tom Simpson of Baltimore, MD adds TRINGA to our list of vanity plates. He had this plate when his car was registered in Virginia last year. Dr. Simpson was much more active in CBC when he lived in Winston-Salem in the '50s. His birding is mostly in Virginia and Maryland now, but he hopes to join us in Asheville for the fall meeting.

* * *

H. E. Savely of Beaufort, NC notes that his car sports the North Carolina personalized plate CBC - CHAT. Herb Hendrickson appreciates the publicity.

Ronald D. Johnson, 220 Channel View Ct, Cape Carteret, Swansboro, NC 28584, has acquired a few copies of a check list of first issues of the plates in the first folio edition of Audubon's *Birds of America*. This 16 page pamphlet was published in 1941 by E. F. Hanaburgh, bibliographer for Sotheby's. Ron will be happy to mail a copy to interested CBC members as long as they last. Although he didn't mention it, I'm sure \$1 to cover mailing expense would be appreciated.

CBC RARE BIRD ALERT
(704) 332-BIRD

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND ORDER FORM

Name _____ Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Tel. () _____ (home) _____ (business) _____

ENTER/RENEW MEMBERSHIP AS INDICATED

SEND MATERIALS INDICATED

☐ Individual (\$12)	☐ Life (\$200)	☐ CBC Cloth arm patch \$1.50 ea., \$1.25 ea. in quantity
☐ Family (\$15)	☐ Patron (\$ 50)	☐ CBC Decals (water type) 75c ea., 50c ea. in quantity
☐ Student (\$ 6)		☐ Daily Checklists 10/\$1.00, 25/\$1.25, 50/\$2.50, 75/\$3.75
☐ Affiliate Club (\$15)		100/\$5.00
☐ Library/Institution (\$15)	Make check payable to Carolina Bird Club, Inc. and mail to PO Box 27647, Raleigh, NC 27611	

HOLIDAY INN RESERVATION FORM

Carolina Bird Club Fall Meeting, September 21-23, 1990

Name _____ Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

ROOMS (single or double occupancy) \$42.12 including tax.

Please reserve _____ room(s) at \$42.12 per night. My check for the first night's lodging is enclosed. I will arrive _____ and depart _____.

Mail with deposit to HOLIDAY INN-EAST, 1450 Tunnel Rd., Asheville, NC 28805 or call (704) 298-5611 before August 21.

REGISTRATION FORM

CBC Fall Meeting, September 21-23, 1990

Name(s) _____
(list each name for name tags)
Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____ for _____ member registrations at \$4 each and _____ nonmember registrations at \$5 each. Registration at meeting will be \$5 for members and \$6 for nonmembers.

Mail with check to CAROLINA BIRD CLUB, INC., PO Box 27647, Raleigh, NC 27611

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

PATRICIA BAILEY
Swansboro, NC

STACY GROVE
Franklinton, NC

R. A. PAGE
Beaufort, SC

AUDREY J. BOOTH
Durham, NC

CLINT & PAULA HARSHAW
Newberry, SC

MILDRED W. RIDDLE
Taylors, SC

FRANK & CAROL BREMER
Edisto Island, SC

STEPHANIE HUDAK
Greenville, NC

JOYCE L. RICE
Anderson, SC

RIC CARTER
Washington, NC

SUSAN ELLS JOSEPH
Rhinebeck, NY

CATHERINE SCHMIDT
Washington, NC

ANDREA CESELSKI
Columbia, SC

TIM KALBACH
Greenwood, SC

DEBORAH D. SQUIRES
Beaufort, SC

THELMA DALMAS
Lynchburg, VA

MARK MCKELLAR family
Timberlake, NC

ROBERT C. WILLIAMS
Hickory, NC

REBECCA DEATON
Winston-Salem, NC

TONY & JANE MASICH
Winston-Salem, NC

JANET YORK
Winston-Salem, NC

MARGERY EATON
Lake Toxaway, NC

SUSAN MITCHELL
Pisgah Forest, NC

NANCY GALES
Charleston, SC

VAUGHN & BETH MORRISON
Cary, NC

STORK SIGHTED OVER RALEIGH

A White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) was reported in the Rex Hospital area of Raleigh, NC at 1:38 p.m. on 25 May 1990. The only confirmation of this unusual sighting was the presence of

Mary Claire Becker, an 8 lb., 21 inch long bundle of joy. Broad smiles were also seen on the faces of CBC Headquarters Secretary, Laura Becker, and her husband, Dan.

DECEASED

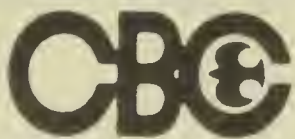
HAL F. DANIELS
Wingate, NC

MARGARET CONDERMAN
New Bern, NC

MRS. W. C. STONE
Clinton, SC

CBC NEWSLETTER is published quarterly by Carolina Bird Club, Inc., the ornithological society of the Carolinas, with headquarters at Raleigh, NC. CBC is a nonprofit corporation, founded in 1937, with membership open to anyone interested in birds, natural history and conservation. Members are encouraged to submit items of interest to CBC Newsletter, Clyde Smith, Editor, 2615 Wells Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27608.

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U. S. Post Office
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